



**Office of the Attorney General
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ATTORNEY GENERAL FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST TOBACCO DISTRIBUTOR FOR
NUMEROUS STATE LAW VIOLATIONS**

Tennessee Attorney General Paul G. Summers, on behalf of Commissioner Loren L. Chumley of the Department of Revenue, has filed suit against DWI, LLC of Russell, Ky for a number of state tobacco law violations. DWI is a "licensed agent" in Tennessee, which means it is authorized to affix tobacco stamps to tobacco products.

The State's lawsuit alleges that DWI has repeatedly failed to file the wholesale licensed distributor reports required by state law as a licensed wholesaler selling tobacco products in Tennessee. The State also alleges that DWI failed to respond to repeated requests for information from the Department of Revenue and the Attorney General's Office.

DWI is alleged to have sold "Southern Classic" cigarettes when the cigarettes were not listed on the State's Directory. Tennessee law prohibits tax stamps from being affixed to any tobacco product that is not listed on the State's Tobacco Product and Brand Family Directory. (See <http://www.state.tn.us/revenue/tntaxes/tobacco/listings.htm>). In Tennessee, it is also illegal to sell, distribute, transport or import cigarettes not listed on the Directory.

The State is seeking a permanent injunction requiring DWI to stop violating state law and requiring them to file the required reports. It is also seeking attorneys' fees and to seize all profits from the sale of the allegedly illegal cigarettes in Tennessee.

If anyone has information about any person or entity that is not complying with Tennessee's tobacco regulation statutes is encouraged to call the Tobacco Enforcement Division's hotline at (615) 532-9480 (for local calls) or (800) 890-8366. The hotline is set up to receive information and comments by voicemail. The staff monitors messages and callers are not required to identify themselves when leaving a message.